

2023 WCC Spring Hearing Questions

Warm Water

1. Lake Wausau Northern Pike Slot Limit (370722)

Lake Wausau has the capability of producing big Northern Pike. DNR studies show northerns can grow at a fast rate. Due to increased fishing pressure, especially ice fishing, their abundance and size structure seems to have gone down. Adding a slot would still allow harvest of smaller yet quality-sized northern pike while allowing larger ones to grow protected and provide trophy potential. This would align with a current DNR fisheries toolbox regulation.

Would you support adding a protected slot for Northern Pike on Lake Wausau of 25-35 inches with a daily bag limit of 2 fish?

2. Wisconsin Northern Pike Ice Spearing (280422, 380822, 540822, 570822, 590222, 661022, 711622)

Harvest of Northern Pike by method of hand propelled spear is a long-lasting tradition that is still practiced by many of our neighboring states. Wisconsin's own sturgeon spearing season draws thousands of anglers yearly. Season restrictions should follow the examples set by the Minnesota DNR opening December 1st and going throughout the remaining game fish season. Holes by law would need to be properly marked as is practiced in Wisconsin's sturgeon spearing season. This change to our fishing laws would provide another method of harvest and promote a safe and responsible way to enjoy our state's natural resources.

Would you support a Wisconsin Northern Pike spearing season from the first Saturday in December through the last Sunday in February?

3. Panfish Daily Bag Limit on Pelican Lake, Oneida County (441222)

The DNR established an 18-inch minimum length and a daily bag limit of one bass in 1995 to deal with a rusty crayfish problem. After 26 years of this regulation, bass are now abundant and crayfish are scarce. Bass have moved on from rusty crayfish to consuming panfish. As a result, panfish populations have declined. Reducing the daily bag limit on panfish could reduce harvest pressure and help improve panfish size structure.

Would you support a daily bag limit of 10 panfish for Pelican Lake, Oneida County?

4. Bass Size and Bag Limit on Pelican Lake, Oneida County (440322)

The DNR established an 18-inch minimum length and a daily bag limit of one bass in 1995 to deal with a rusty crayfish problem. After 26 years of this regulation, bass are now abundant and rusty crayfish are scarce. Bass are protected by the DNR in this lake for two reasons: First, to control rusty crayfish and second, to reduce stunted panfish populations. Bass have moved on

from rusty crayfish to consuming panfish in Pelican Lake. A change in the regulation will allow anglers to reduce bass abundance and allow for a positive impact on panfish and the fishery as a whole.

Would you support a 14-18" protected slot size for bass on Pelican Lake, Oneida Cty? Only large and smallmouth bass less than 14" maybe kept except for 1 fish over 18" with a daily bag limit of 5 Total.

5. Reducing the Panfish Daily Bag Limit on the Wisconsin River's Rainbow Flowage (441322)

Panfish are a popular target for anglers throughout the state. The Rainbow Flowage contains a very harvestable population. Frequent low water levels create concentrated areas where panfish can be easily exploited.

Would you support lowering panfish daily bag limits on the Rainbow Flowage from 25 to a 10 fish per day limit?

6. Panfish Protection on Marl Lake, Waushara County (700222)

Heavy fishing pressure and harvest of panfish on this no-wake, 30-acre seepage lake is a concern. Reducing the panfish daily bag limit from 25 to 10 would help the population flourish and create a better angling opportunity.

Would you support a daily panfish bag limit of 10 in aggregate on Marl Lake, Waushara County?

7. Reduce Panfish Bag Limit on Norrie Lake (Marathon County) to 10 Fish (370922)

Norrie Lake currently has a daily bag limit of 25 panfish per day. This 110-acre lake sees tremendous fishing pressure due to its close proximity to Wausau and numerous access points on both the north and south sides of the lake. The lake has been seeing a steady decline in panfish. Crappies, once abundant, are now rare to catch. The Norrie Sportsmans Club has worked to improve fish habitat by installing fish sticks and cribs. Reducing the bag limit should allow the lake to recover.

Would you support reducing the daily bag limit on panfish to 10 fish in aggregate on Norrie Lake?

8. Reducing Panfish Bag Limit to 10 on the Spirit River Flowage (371122)

The Spirit River Flowage, located in Lincoln County, currently has a panfish bag limit of 25 per day. Due to increased angling pressure and advances in technology, catch rates have declined. Reducing the bag limit to 10 fish per day could help increase size structure and would align with the current panfish toolbox regulation.

Would you support reducing the panfish daily bag limit to 10 in aggregate on the Spirit River Flowage?

9. Change Forest County Trolling Regulations to Align with Northern Most Counties (one hook, bait or lure per person: three lines maximum per boat) (210222)

There are conflicting trolling regulations on several lakes contained in more than one county. These conflicting regulations cause confusion. For example: Kentuck Lake covers both Vilas and Forest County. Vilas has the "one line per person, max three per boat reg while Forest County has the "Three lines per person, no max per boat" regulation. Current regulations in Forest County do not protect smaller lakes under 200 acres to sustain walleye and muskie populations. 181 of the 208 named lakes in Forest County are less than 200 acres. Currently boats with up to 6 planer boards (there is no maximum) are allowed to troll these lakes, depleting walleye and muskie populations.

Would you support adding Forest County to the list of counties with the trolling regulation "one hook, bait, or lure per person, three lines maximum per boat"?

10. Fishing with Hook and Line in a Sturgeon Hole (200622)

In the past, using a camera to aid in sturgeon spearing has been discussed. It was determined that it didn't matter because there exists a quota on how many sturgeon can be harvested. Because that is the case, bringing back fishing in the sturgeon hole for other species would provide another recreational opportunity, especially for younger anglers who may not have the patience to sit and stare into a hole for hours.

Would you support bringing back the opportunity to fish with a hook and line in a sturgeon hole?

11. Panfish Limits on Delta Lake, Bayfield County (041622)

Delta Lake in Bayfield Co. is a 180-acre lake. Three resorts and a large county campground puts heavy usage on this lake. Lowering the panfish daily bag limit from 25 to 10 per day would alleviate some of the heavy harvest for a better overall experience.

Would you support the DNR in lowering the daily bag limit on Delta Lake, Bayfield County to 10 per day?

12. Chippewa River/Lake Wissota Daily Panfish/ Crappie Bag Limit Decrease (090122)

Crappie/panfish are highly sought after in the Chippewa River/Lake Wissota River System. Decreasing the daily bag limit would improve the population and increase future opportunities for successful pan fishing within the system.

Would you support a decreased daily bag limit and implementation of a minimum size limit on panfish for the Lake Wissota section of the Chippewa River and its tributaries?

13. Mead Lake (Clark County) Panfish Bag Limit Initiative (100322, 100622)

Mead Lake has a healthy food source to maintain a healthy and quality size panfish population. Unfortunately, due to heavy fishing/harvest pressure the panfish size structure is below average. By limiting the daily bag limit of panfish, better overall size structure would be created and it would likely improve the quality of the fishery.

Would you support a year-round daily panfish limit of 25 fish with only 10 of any one species per day on Mead Lake in Clark County?

Environmental Committee

14. Biosolids Testing and Initiatives (160522)

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of over 4,000 “forever chemicals” that are used in a wide variety of consumer products from water repellants, non-stick pans, stain resistant materials, cosmetics, fire-fighting foams, fast food wrappers and paper production. In Wisconsin and in many states biosolids or wastewater sludge are commonly applied to farm fields as a substitute for fertilizer. Research indicates biosolids may contain high concentrations of PFAS. Studies have shown that PFAS concentrations in soil indicate a direct correlation between bioaccumulation in plants after application. As a potential contamination source for soil, groundwater, and crops for human consumption, the citizens of Wisconsin need to be assured that the wild game, fish, and domestic animals Wisconsin residents consume are safe to eat. Smelt consumption from Lake Superior have been restricted to an 8 oz portion per month for adults by the state of Michigan due to PFAS contamination. In December 2020, the Wisconsin DNR released the PFAS Action Plan. According to this plan, it has been discovered that PFAS substances bioaccumulate in the human body and studies have found that 98% of Americans have measurable levels of PFAS in their blood. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), certain PFAS substances pose a number of risks to human health, including developmental problems in fetuses and infants, certain types of cancer, reduced antibody response, decreased immune response to vaccinations, and kidney disease. The PFAS Action Plan includes 8 different action recommendations including Standard Setting, Sampling, and Pollution Prevention. In February 2022, the NRB voted to approve a drinking water standard of 70 parts per trillion (PPT), while the DNR had proposed 20 PPT as part of the action plan and as recommended by the Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services.

Does the public support more testing and stricter standards for PFAS levels including in biosolids and groundwater?

15. Reinstate Prove it First Mining Law-1997 Act 171 (451222) (Requires Legislation)

Issue: Act 171 was passed in 1997-98, with overwhelming bipartisan support (29-3 in the Senate and 91-6 in the Assembly and was signed by Gov. Thompson), “Prove It First” was a reaction to high-profile cases of pollution from sulfide mines. When sulfide rock comes into contact with water, the reaction produces sulfuric acid runoff—a dangerous and long-lasting pollutant that

devastates rivers, lakes, and streams. This landmark legislation requires mining corporations to provide an example of a metallic sulfide mine in the U.S. that hasn't polluted local watersheds in order to establish operations in the state. One peer reviewed study in 2006 found that 76% of mining projects that claimed they would not pollute still did so. More importantly, 100% of sulfide mines have failed to properly contain sulfide pollution. In 2017, Act 171 was repealed and replaced with 2017 Act 134 which was passed mainly on a party line vote. Because metallic mining continues to pollute where it is done; it is necessary to reinstate the Prove it First Act 171 from 1997.

Do you support increasing protection of Wisconsin's environment by recommending the Wisconsin Legislature reinstate the Prove It first Mining Law-1997 Act 171?

16. Restrict Lead Fishing Tackle in Wisconsin (681922, 650322, 641522, 530922, 521122, 441522, 412622, 340422, 330422, 300622, 280322, 250422, 133422, 110922, 042022, 020622)

All anglers have experienced lines breaking, fish getting away and losing lures. Lost tackle has a direct impact on populations of loons, swans, eagles, and osprey. In the last 27 years, Northern Wisconsin's Common Loon population has decreased by 22%. A surveillance program examining lead toxicity as a factor in mortality of Common Loons in Wisconsin found that approximately 30% of the dead loons submitted for necropsy were lead poisoned. It's important to look at this as a preventable issue. Limiting the amount of small lead sinkers and jigs would help reduce stress on breeding loons and increase the health of the ecosystem. Many alternatives to lead tackle are available, including tungsten, tin, iron, and others. The cost of replacing small lead jigs and split sinkers would be nominal for most anglers.

Do you support the WCC working with the DNR, the Natural Resources Board and our state legislature to implement a statewide ban on lead jigs and sinkers weighing 1oz or less?

17. End Lead Poisoning of Bald Eagles (630322, 600822, 570422, 530422, 520722, 411722, 380322, 370522, 360322, 240322, 230322, 200522, 180622, 131722, 120322, 110222, 080122, 041222, 010422)

Bald eagles, our national symbol, made a remarkable recovery after their populations were decimated by wide use of the pesticide DDT. Although our eagles are no longer classified as threatened, they continue to face a serious threat. Recent research has documented that lead poisoning from bullet fragments is a health problem for eagles across the nation, and that lead poisoning has suppressed the growth rate of northeastern U.S. eagle populations. Here in Wisconsin, our licensed wildlife rehabilitators treat a couple hundred eagles and other raptors annually for lead poisoning from feeding on carcass remains. It's clear that eagle poisoning cases peak in the fall and early winter as they feed upon deer or other wildlife remains left in the woods from the hunting seasons. Hunters are not intentionally poisoning eagles, but the lead core bullets sold to them fracture upon impact and is ingested by scavenging birds. The good news is that nonlead bullets are increasingly available and just as effective for hunting. The bad news is most Wisconsin hunters are unaware of the lead poisoning issue for eagles, and the benefits of switching to non-lead alternatives. We can fix this. Wisconsin needs a statewide

outreach program to inform hunters of the lead poisoning problem and how they can help by switching to non-lead bullets. Many state conservation organizations are willing to partner with the WDNR and Conservation Congress to build such a program.

Do you support the Conservation Congress and WDNR working cooperatively with other conservation organizations to develop a statewide outreach program that increases the use of non-lead ammunition to end the lead poisoning of wildlife?

18. DNR Support for Clean Water (710522, 680722, 630222, 600422, 570322, 530322, 520422, 460322, 450322, 440422, 420222, 411122, 350222, 320622, 310222, 290122, 260222, 220222, 170322, 131122, 120222, 090222, 040722, 010322)

Clean water is essential to life -- for drinking, bathing, fishing, recreation, and more. Factory farms, or CAFOs (defined for the dairy industry as 700 or more milking cows) pose a threat to clean water and their numbers have increased dramatically since 2005. In much of rural Wisconsin, factory farm sewage is raising the nitrate in groundwater to levels that put babies at risk for birth defects and blue baby syndrome. Nitrates have also been implicated in colon cancer and thyroid problems. Over 10% of Wisconsin's private wells have unsafe levels of nitrates, and private well owners in Wisconsin have paid an estimated 3 to 5 million dollars to repair or replace their wells, treat nitrate in drinking water or obtain bottled water. In addition to the economic burden of well replacement, the health costs associated with high nitrate levels are a major issue. Much of the nitrate contaminating Wisconsin's water comes from manure, which is rich in nitrate, and which is produced in unsustainable amounts by factory farms. Factory farms are subject to rules requiring that an acceptable manure management plan be adopted and implemented. The fact that well water in our rural communities continues to show nitrate contamination indicates that these measures have been inadequate. The problem can be addressed with a robust enforcement program requiring groundwater monitoring and reporting by factory farm owners and imposing corrective actions when contamination is found.

To reduce potential groundwater and surface water nitrate and ecoli contamination, do you support the DNR requiring best available groundwater monitoring protocols for all permitted CAFO operations in Wisconsin?

Outdoor Heritage & Education Committee

19. Ban Shining of Wild Animals from Sept 15th to December 31st (690322) (requires legislation)

Currently DNR regulations allow the shining of wild animals from January 1st to September 14 with no time restrictions. After September 15th thru December 31st there is a prohibition of shining from 10:00 pm until 7am. This time frame covers most of the deer hunting seasons. Some hunters, conservation groups, landowners, and law enforcement officers have seen this rule to be abused by poachers, and thrill killers. Many landowners whose homes, property and livestock are being shined find it upsetting. If a shining ban were in place at this time, it would help wardens enforce poaching laws and reduce thrill killings as citizens could report all shining activities not having to distinguish who is legal and who is not. It is also felt that trail cameras have replaced the use of shining by landowners to scout deer on their property.

Do you support a ban on the shining of wildlife in the state of Wisconsin from Sept 15th thru December 31st?

20. Increase the Number of Days for the State Youth Spring Turkey Hunt from 2 to 4 (370622)

In order to provide a better opportunity to our new youth hunters be it proposed that the State Youth Turkey Hunt be increased from 2 days to 3 and include the Friday along with the usual Saturday and Sunday. Some years as is the case this year in 2022 the State Youth Turkey Hunt falls on Easter weekend and with religious and family obligations to account for it can be difficult for hunters to get out on Sunday to hunt therefore limiting them to one day. Adding another day will provide a better opportunity for these young hunters to get out and enjoy the spring woods and possibly harvest a turkey.

Would you support increasing the State Youth Turkey Hunt from 2 days to 4 and include the Friday of that weekend to increase youth hunting opportunities?

21. Wanton Waste (requires legislation)

Currently Wisconsin does not have a Wanton Waste Law for game animals or fish. Wisconsin Waste of Resources Law 23.095 (1m) lacks definition to enforce wasted game resources on private and public property. In Wisconsin if a person hunting or fishing harvests game and removes it from the field, they are no longer obligated to utilize the animal for any use of common practice. For example, if a person harvests an animal or fish, removes it from the field, and throws it away, they are breaking no laws. Most states have wanton waste laws to prevent people from harvesting animals and then not utilizing them.

This regulation would cover Wisconsin game animals, upland game birds, migratory game birds, and fish. Usable meat refers to the breast meat from game birds, and migratory game birds. The hind hams, shoulders, and backstraps of big game, rabbits and squirrels, and the fillets from game fish.

This regulation would not apply to unprotected animals defined by Wis NR 10.04, animals taken for nuisance control, or parts of animals that are damaged, decayed, diseased or infected making them unfit for human consumption.

Do you support the conservation Congress work with the DNR and the Legislature to develop language to strengthen Wis Waste of Resources 23.095 (1M) to prohibit the waste of game animals and fish in Wisconsin?

Fur Harvest

22. Bobcat Shooting Hour Restrictions (060222, 620422) (requires legislation)

Hunting most predators, including red and gray foxes, coyotes and raccoons in Wisconsin is a common legal practice. However, hunting bobcats in Wisconsin is restricted to the hours shown on the Deer, Elk, Bear, Small Game and Fall Turkey Shooting Hours table which is published in

the annual Wisconsin Hunting Regulations. Night hunting of bobcats is not legal. Bobcats may only be hunted by hunters holding a bobcat harvest authorization. Such permits are distributed by lottery. Since bobcats are protected by the harvest permit system, and for the sake of consistency with other species, some hunters would like to be able to hunt and harvest bobcats at night.

Do you support a change in bobcat hunting rules which would allow the hunting and harvest of bobcats at night?

23. Extending the Beaver Season (720422)

Currently, there are four beaver trapping zones in Wisconsin. Seasons vary from zone to zone, opening as early as the first Saturday in November, and closing as late as May 1. Most sources consider beaver populations to be high. Beaver harvest is largely in response to fur prices, and it is feared that without added beaver control, occurrences of beaver damage will increase. Opening beaver seasons two weeks earlier and closing them four weeks later would help to control beaver populations.

Do you support opening the beaver season two weeks earlier and closing it four weeks later in each zone?

24. Use of Infrared Light for Scanning for Predators (350522) (requires legislation)

Current law allows hunters who are hunting at night to do so with the aid of lights. However, they cannot continually scan the landscape for target animals. They can only use lights to illuminate a target animal whose presence has become known, at the point of kill. Some hunters feel that if they could continually scan the landscape, using infrared light-based equipment, they could better identify their target, and wait for the most sure and humane shot opportunity.

Do you support allowing the continuously scanning of the landscape while hunting at night, using infrared light-based equipment?

Motorized Recreation

25-30. Hazardous Wake from Wake Surfing Boats (133822, 133922, 640822, 640922, 641122, 641212) (requires legislation)

Wake Boat Resolutions Background Information Recently the sport of wake surfing has been increasing on Wisconsin lakes. Wake surfing is surfing without a tow rope directly behind a specially equipped boat that can generate a large magnified powerful wake. Wake boats operate at about 10 mph plowing through the water, never reaching on plane position. The bow is up and the stern is down causing forward visibility concerns. The propeller is angled downward about 40 degrees below horizontal causing propeller wash to scour the bottom at least 20 feet deep. Wake surfing requires the generation of a large hazardous wake. A hazardous wake is defined as a boat wake that is intentionally magnified through the use of ballast, design features or operational procedures to amplify the wake's height and consequently generates large dangerous waves. The concern is these hazardous wakes have

the potential to create a safety hazard to others using the lake; damage the environment; destroy personal property and erode the shoreline.

Unregulated wake surfacing has the potential to:

- Churn lakebed with downward prop wash Create murky turbid water Destroy aquatic plants
- Destroy spawning beds
- Fertilize algae blooms
- Swamp loon nests
- Erode shoreline
- Jet prop wash into the thermocline
- Transfer invasive via residual ballast water
- Endanger others through poor forward visibility
- Endanger others through generation of hazardous wakes Incompatible with other lake users
- Damage the local economy

25. Do you support wake boats causing hazardous wakes on lakes larger than 1,500 acres to be more than 700 feet from shore or other water users? (133822)

26. Do you support prohibiting wake boats from causing hazardous wakes on lakes less than 1,500 acres? (133922)

27. Would you support the WCC and legislature working to amend existing Statutes that prohibit operation of a boat that intentionally creates a hazardous wake within 700 feet of any dock, raft, pier, buoyed restricted area, shoreline and any other watercraft? (640822)

28. Would you support the WCC and legislature creating a new state Statute that prohibits operation of a boat that intentionally creates a hazardous wake on lakes of a specific physical characteristics defined by size, depth, length and width? (640922)

29. Would you support the WCC and legislature working to amend existing Statutes to prohibit methods for intentionally magnifying wakes for wake surfing on lakes less than 1,500 acres? (641122)

30. Would you support the WCC and legislature working to amend existing Statutes to prohibit methods for intentionally magnifying wakes for wake surfing in Presque Isle Township, Vilas County? (641222)

Land Use Committee

31. Simplifying the Permit System for Holding a Field Trial Event on Class II Dog Training Grounds (110522, 682122)

At present, in order for an individual or dog organization to hold a dog field trial event on State owned land or training grounds, they must purchase two permits. One of the permits is a field trial permit and the other is a special use permit. Historically, these grounds and grounds with class I designation have been for dog training and horseback trialing. The ability for dog clubs and dog enthusiasts to hold field trial events on State-owned land is important to the sporting dog community. These events are great opportunities for dog owners, trainers and handlers to test their dogs' skills. Dog training is important to ensure that game is found and recovered efficiently and for ensuring the safety of dogs and hunters while afield. The current permit system requiring the purchase of two separate permits in order to hold a field trial can be a financial burden on dog organizations. It is also complicating because it takes more time to fill out two separate applications for the same activity.

Would you support the WCC working with the Wisconsin DNR and State Legislature to simplify the permit system such that only one permit would be required for an individual or dog organization to hold a field trial event on State-owned land?

Turkey and Upland Game Committee

32. Require the Annual Purchase of a Grouse Stamp Authorization to Hunt Grouse in Wisconsin (670722) (requires legislation)

Wisconsin has the rare privilege to have four species of native grouse. The Ruffed Grouse is the most abundant and the only species that is regularly hunted. We also have the Sharp-tailed Grouse and the Greater Prairie Chicken that have less frequent huntable populations. The fourth is the Spruce Grouse, which is protected in Wisconsin, and has very limited habitat in a few northern counties. The lack of studies of the Spruce Grouse, along with its secretive nature make it the least known of the grouse species.

The Ruffed Grouse retains game bird status in the state and Wisconsin's population is among the highest in the United States. The Ruffed Grouse Management Plan (RGMP) has reported several decades of decline in both grouse numbers and the early-succession forest habitat that grouse depend on. Each of these grouse species require unique stages of plant community succession and their specific habitat requirements have been compromised by human impacts and land use changes. The sustainability of our four grouse species in Wisconsin will depend, in part, on funding for habitat management, acquisition, and research.

Would you support legislation requiring hunters to purchase a \$10.00 Grouse Stamp or Habitat Stamp to hunt grouse, with the funds generated used for habitat management, land acquisition, and research benefitting all four of the state's native grouse species?

33. Hunter Orange Requirement for Upland Bird Hunting (requires legislation)

Over the past years there have been several Citizen Resolutions that have come before the Turkey and Upland Game Committee asking for the state to implement the requirement of some type of hunter orange use while hunting upland birds, specifically pheasants and grouse. Our committee would like to get feedback from the hunting community on this issue.

Would you favor legislation that would require the use of 50% hunter orange garments above the waist for the hunting of upland game birds (excluding turkey and waterfowl) outside of the current requirement of this during any gun deer hunt.

Deer & Elk Committee

34. The Wisconsin Conservation Congress often hears from hunters about changes in the Wisconsin firearm deer hunting season. This question is designed to gauge hunter preferences for the firearm deer season. Of the three options, please select your preference.

a) Would you prefer a 16-day firearm season with an earlier start followed by a 10-day muzzleloader season? (requires legislation)

b) Would you prefer combining the current 9-day firearm season with the muzzleloader season for 19 days of firearm deer hunting? During this season hunters with the proper authorization may use rifle, muzzleloader, crossbow or vertical bow for the entire 19 days? This is the season that is currently used in all Metro deer hunting zones.

C). Do you prefer the current 9-day firearm deer season followed by the 10-day muzzleloader season with no changes?

35. Create a Random Drawing for Bonus Antlerless Deer Authorization (210122) (requires legislation)

The current system of awarding bonus antlerless deer harvest authorization on a first come first serve basis in counties with limited available tags is biased against individuals who are unable to access computers, smart phones or visit an establishment that offers such a service. Persons who are unable to login to the application system or visit a license outlet at a precise time of day are at a definite disadvantage in the application process.

Would you support a process to award bonus antlerless deer harvest authorizations in counties with limited number of available authorizations via a random drawing system similar to the system currently used for bobcat, bear, fisher, elk, turkey and wolf permits.

Legislative Committee

36. "Vets on the Lake" Veterans Free Fishing Weekend (160122) (requires legislation)

Legislation creating a Veterans Free "Vets on the Lake" Fishing Weekend in Wisconsin. In the State of Wisconsin, current law supports two special event Free Fishing weekends per year. They occur the third full weekend in January and the first full weekend in June and are open to all Wisconsin residents. Many U.S. military veterans would like an additional chance to spend a weekend fishing All waters of Wisconsin including Lake Superior and/or Lake Michigan. In recent years local Sporting Organizations have sponsored "Vets on the Lake" including event in 2021 at Superior, Wisconsin where 65 Veterans were able to fish on Lake Superior and then participate in a picnic in their honor. Legislation creating an additional Free weekend for

Veterans is desired on the fourth full weekend in July as a free fishing weekend for veterans. During this special event weekend (Vets on the Lake) the DNR would waive requirements for veterans to have a fishing license to fish in Wisconsin's waters.

Would you Support Legislation Creating a Free Fishing Weekend Specifically for Veterans "Vets on the Lake" for All Waters in Wisconsin?

Trout Committee

37. Designate a 12" Size Limit for Trout on the Entire Class I Portions of the Onion River in Sheboygan County (600222)

The size limit for trout on the Onion River is now 12" upstream of the County E bridge and 9" below County E. The size limits were put in place when rainbow trout were stocked in the river. Stocking is no longer done as the Onion is a self-sustaining brown trout fishery. A consistent size limit would improve the fishery by allowing more trout to reach spawning age. A consistent regulation would also reduce confusion and compliance with the regulation.

Would you support a consistent 12-inch size limit for trout on all Class I waters of the Onion River (Sheboygan County)?

38. Stricter Water Quality and Depth Regulations for Millponds on Trout Streams and Rivers (Requires legislation)

For over 100 years many millponds are still in existence but are not being used for what they were first intended. Now many are filled in with sediment and are creating a very unhealthy environment. Many have very few gamefish and mostly rough fish like carp. They can have very high nutrient pollution and invasive species issues. The biggest threat is water quality degradation. Even though upstream from some of these impediments are high quality class 1 or 2 trout streams with temps in the 60's, these millponds can reach temps over 90 degrees. Temperatures that high will kill most game fish and will create massive algae blooms that can be toxic to humans and animals. Because these ponds are river systems, the poor water quality affects everyone and everything downstream. The dam owners and property owners should be held responsible for the negative environmental impacts these millponds cause. These much-needed regulations would help prevent impaired water from millponds causing problems downstream to all the waters flowing out of the millpond.

Would you support the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Board working with the state legislature to create water quality and depth regulations for millponds on class I or II trout streams?